

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated September 7, 2004, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on December 7, 2004. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Drawings

The drawings stand objected to under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.83(a) and 1.84(p)(4). In response, Applicant amended the drawings and canceled claims 1-17 without prejudice as those claims are the subject of U.S. Patent No. 6,722,443. The amendments to the drawings contain no new matter. Additionally, Applicant submits that the new claims do not contain the features identified by the Examiner with respect to this objection. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection and acceptance of the drawings.

Specification

The specification stands objected to because of various informalities. In response, Applicant amended the specification and respectfully traverses. These amendments contain no new matter.

Applicant replaced the abstract to conform to proper language and format as requested by the Examiner. Additionally, Applicant submits that the subject matter in WO97/17524 is not "essential material" necessary to describe the claimed invention, provide an enabling disclosure of the claimed invention or describe the best mode. Thus, the incorporation by reference of this publication is proper since it only incorporates non-essential subject matter associated with related prior art that provides the background of the invention. Furthermore, Applicant corrected the identification of TEFLON™ throughout the specification as requested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

Double Patenting

Claims 1-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claims 1-14 and 17-20 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,722,443. In response, Applicant canceled the claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

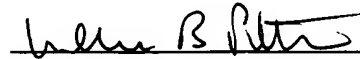
New Claims

Applicant submits that the new claims are supported by the specification and patentable over the cited references. Regarding claim 18, the cited references fail to teach, show or suggest an outer tubular coupled to a first tubular and substantially surrounding an external circumferential junction between the first tubular and a second tubular when they are connected, wherein the outer tubular is adapted to resist radial expansion to ensure that integrity between the first and second tubulars is retained after radial expansion of their connection. In regards to claim 28, the cited references fail to teach, show or suggest passing an expander through a connection between a first and second tubular to expand the connection downhole, wherein an outer tubular coupled to the first tubular and substantially surrounding an external circumferential junction between the first and second tubulars resists radial expansion of the first and second tubulars to ensure that integrity between the first and second tubulars is retained after expansion. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the claims.

Conclusion

The references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach, show, or suggest the invention as claimed. Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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IN THE DRAWINGS:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Figure 1. This sheet, which includes Figures 1 and 2, replaces the original sheet including Figures 1 and 2. In Figure 1, one of the reference numerals 32 has been omitted.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet